

American Bald Eagle and Uncle Sam Balloons Return for Ninth Annual VA Veterans Day Parade



On the backs of our gold coins, the silver dollar, the half dollar and the quarter, we see an eagle with outspread wings. The bald eagle was chosen June 20, 1782 as the emblem of the United States of America, because of its long life, great strength, majestic looks, and because it represents freedom. The large helium bald eagle, with a 35-foot wingspan, debuted in the 2004 VA Veterans Day Parade and will make its second showing in the 2005 parade on Friday, November 11 at 11 a.m.

Due to overwhelming popularity, the 47-foot Uncle Sam balloon that debuted in 2003 will be on the parade route again. The Uncle Sam balloon is the largest balloon in Phoenix Parade history. Created during World War I the Uncle Sam character helps inspire Americans in the Armed Forces.

Inflation of the balloons begins at 8 a.m. on parade day in front of the VA's Building 4, NW corner of 7th Street and Devonshire. It will take about two hours to fill both balloons. A team of 12 handlers will help carry each balloon along the parade route, making sure that they don't hit any light poles or wires.. Volunteers from the Army and Air National Guard will be the balloon handlers.

This is the third year the helium balloons are entries in VA's Veterans Day Parade.

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